

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 03-19-21

More Michiganders will soon be eligible for COVID-19 vaccine

Ithaca, Stanton, St. Johns- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) made several recent announcements further expanding eligibility for COVID-19 vaccinations.

On March 8, the following groups became eligible:

- Adults 50 years of age and older with chronic health conditions like cancer, kidney disease, COPD, Down Syndrome, heart conditions, weakened immune system, obesity, sickle cell disease, smoking, and Type 2 diabetes.
- Caregiver family members and guardians 16 years of age and older who care for children with special health care needs (physical, developmental, mental, sensor, behavioral, cognitive, or emotional impairment or limiting condition that requires medical management).

On March 22 the following will become eligible:

- Everyone 50 years of age and older.
- Those 16 years of age and older with disabilities or medical conditions, like cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, Down Syndrome, heart conditions, weakened immune system, obesity, sickle cell disease, smoking, and Type 2 diabetes.

On April 5 the following will become eligible:

- All Michiganders age 16 years of age and older. It is important to note that those under 18 will need to get the Pfizer vaccine as it is the only one approved for that age group. Information on where those under 18 can get vaccinated will be added to our website at www.mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information/

Demand for the vaccine continues to exceed supply, so even though you might now be eligible, keep in mind that it does not necessarily mean you'll be able to get a vaccination appointment right away. The good news is that more and more vaccination locations are opening up in our area and we recommend people explore all of these options to increase their chances of obtaining an appointment. These locations can be found on our website: www.mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information/.

If you qualify and would like to be added to our waiting list, please visit our website at

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www.mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information/. When we have COVID-19 appointments available, we notify those on our waiting list via email, in the order in which they signed up.

We know that those without internet or our seniors might have an especially difficult time trying to schedule a COVID-19 vaccination appointment. We encourage these individuals to call 211 for assistance. Seniors over 60 who do not have internet or who struggle to use a computer may call their nearest office on aging. Clinton County seniors can call the Tri-County Office on Aging at 517-887-1440. Gratiot County seniors can call the Gratiot County Commission on Aging at 989-875-5246. Montcalm County seniors can call the Montcalm County Commission on Aging at 989-831-7476.

Since February 20 there has been an increase in COVID-19 cases reported in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties. Many of these new cases are more contagious variants of the virus that are spreading rapidly. Because of this, Mid-Michigan District Health Department is advising everyone to remain vigilant when it comes to COVID-19 safety. We all need to continue preventative measures such as wearing masks properly, social distancing, and hand washing to reduce the spread of COVID in our communities, even as the vaccine is being administered.

The increase in cases is due to a combination of relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and public exhaustion from adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines. We know it has been a long year, and we know COVID fatigue has set in, but we've come too far to give up now.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.

We take action to protect, maintain and improve the health of our community.

Advancing innovative solutions to achieve healthier outcomes

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